



West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

August 29, 2025 Friday Memo

Upcoming Events

September 3: Superintendent Town Hall Meeting, Area 4, DeAnza High School, 5:30 pm
September 3: Superintendent Town Hall Meeting, Area 5, El Cerrito High School, 7:00 pm
September 4: Superintendent Town Hall Meeting, Virtual, 9:00 am
September 4: 2025 Contra Costa County Teachers of the Year Dinner & Celebration, Hilton Concord, 6:00 pm
September 4: Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC) Virtual, 6:00 pm
September 8: Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) Meeting, Facilities Operations Center, 6:15 pm
September 9: Superintendent Town Hall Meeting, Area 1, Pinole Valley High School, 5:30 pm

Contra Costa County Teacher of Year Celebration and Dinner



We are excited to announce that Zsarleen Posadas, teacher at Montalvin Manor, and Kaitlin Marchesi, teacher at Vista Virtual Academy, will be honored at the Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year Celebration and Dinner on Thursday, September 4 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hilton Concord. Kaitlin Marchesi is a finalist for the County Teacher of the Year.

Area 2 & 3 “Can We Talk?” Community Listening Sessions



District staff hosted two successful hybrid community listening sessions on Thursday evening at De Jean Middle School and Richmond High School. Between the two sessions, 46 students, parents, grandparents, and community members attended in person, and 18 community members attended online. Over a dozen Cabinet members and district leaders attended to support. Participants completed a survey and engaged in small group discussions identifying what is working well in our schools, what we need to address to improve, and recommendations for areas of focus for the year. Materials were available in both English and Spanish, and translators were available to support participants. I want to thank Board members for

attending these sessions. Additional listening sessions will be held on September 3, 4, and 9 (see dates, times, and locations above).

English Learner Multilingual Achievement - Katherine Acosta-Verprauskus

The ELMA department has had a successful month of August, welcoming administration, teachers, families, and students alike.

We started the month with the great news of the 2024-2025 school year completed reclassification rate. West Contra Costa USD achieved a new high of 12.5%, the highest reclassification rate since the inception of the ELPAC in 2017. This work could not have been achieved without the team effort of school sites and the implementation of high-impact English Learner Strategies.

The remainder of the month was focused at the beginning of the year on English Learner Achievement professional development with teachers of English Learners, and Dual Language Immersion students. There were 118 teacher participants. Our session around making the interim ELPAC more meaningful to enhance English Learner instruction was especially well received by veteran and new teachers.



Kennedy High School AP Course Update

Kennedy High School (KHS) explored opening an AP Spanish section; however, only 11 students selected the course on their choice sheet, which was not sufficient to establish a section. At this time, Principal McGee and the Executive Director are exploring ways for students to access higher-level Spanish courses, either at KHS or through partnerships with local colleges.

No determination has been made. Considerations include ensuring equitable access for both native and non-native Spanish speakers, as well as alignment with district policies governing AP course offerings.

Communications Department- Raechelle Forrest

Update on ECHS Radio Station

The KECG radio station at El Cerrito High School remains temporarily off the air as the campus continues to operate on generator power. The FCC received and approved the temporary notice to pause station operations in March 2025, and the communications department is maintaining regular contact with the FCC. We anticipate that the station will resume operations, contingent upon the completion of the

restoration of permanent power. We will ensure that the community is informed once the station is back on the air.

We appreciate the community's understanding and support as we work towards safely bringing the station back online.

News of the Week Report:

[\\$10M parcel tax for schools likely to appear on a 2026 ballot | Richmondside](#)

West Contra Costa County voters next year will likely be asked to renew Measure T, a parcel tax that generates about \$10 million a year for local schools. First approved in 2004, voters have re-authorized the tax every four-eight years since then to fund student programs including athletics, libraries and guidance counseling at the [West Contra Costa Unified School District](#).

Confidential: Update on Transportation Safety Concern Raised During Board Meeting

Guthrie spoke with the affected parent and her transportation for her child has been resolved with a consistent, safe, and reliable driver. Guthrie is gathering information and will address the matter with First Alt. The team is also holding an IEP meeting to address the parent's concerns that are not related to transportation.

Confidential: Update on Students in Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

During the presentation on charter schools at the 8/27/25 board meeting a data point was shared that 58% of students with IEPs in WCCUSD spend at least 80% of their school day in general education. With the updated Annual Determination Letter (ADL) received from CDE in the spring of 2025 we are actually now serving 65.96% of students with disabilities 80% or more of the day in general education. For reference, the state target is >64% so this is an area in which we are slightly outperforming the state target. It was also noted within the district report, and is worth reiterating here that most charter schools do not have MMSN and ESN self contained classes and don't serve many students with more profound disabilities and needs. Additionally, some parent advocacy groups recommend to parents of students with disabilities that they remain in the district as we provide the full breadth of services to students.

College & Career (CTE & College Readiness/DE)- Summer Sigler

Vice Mayor Cesar Zepeda visits Kennedy High School Construction Trades interns.

We had a fantastic visit with Richmond Vice Mayor and District 2 Councilman Cesar Zepeda as he toured the internship sites of our Kennedy High School Construction and Trades students who were placed this summer. Interns were hosted at Bente Boat LLC, Svendsen's Marina and Industrial Supply, and Levin Richmond Terminal, where they applied the construction and welding skills they developed at Kennedy while working to complete over 120 internship hours.

This was a paid internship opportunity made possible through grant funding. All of the interns were invited back next summer and encouraged to apply for open positions at their respective companies upon graduation, an incredible testament to their impact and performance.

Our partners, including the CEOs and founders of these companies, were extremely impressed by our students' professionalism, skill, and potential. They expressed strong enthusiasm for continuing to grow this partnership and are eager to help bring more WCCUSD students into the trades and maritime workforce.

Special thanks to Bobby Winston at Bay Crossings for his invaluable support in building these partnerships and opening doors for our students.

We also extend our sincere gratitude to the West Contra Costa Public Education Fund (Ed Fund) for serving as the employer of record, handling intern payroll, and providing worker's compensation and liability insurance to ensure a safe and supportive workplace for our students.



District 2 Councilmember and Vice Mayor Cesar Zepeda speaks with Kennedy High School 12th grader Jaime Zaragoza, alongside Levin Richmond Terminal CEO Chris Schaeffer and Chief Administrative Officer Malcolm Whyte.



Cesar Zepeda aboard the newly renovated Richmond Pacific Railroad car, one of the projects Kennedy High School interns Osman Bajorto Cortez and Jaime Zaragoza worked on during their summer internship with Levin Terminal, joined by WCCUSD Work-Based Learning Coordinator Danny Maxwell.



Councilman Cesar Zepeda visits recent Kennedy High School graduate and summer intern Crisanto Villa Senor at Svendsen's Bay Marine, joined by Internship Mentor Wayne Davis and Bill Elliott, founder of Bay Ship & Yacht Co., which includes Svendsen's. Thanks to Wayne's mentorship and Crisanto's outstanding performance over the summer, he is now applying for a full-time position with Svendsen's.



12th grade Kennedy High School Construction Pathway student Hector Perez shows off the Bente Boat, a one-of-a-kind, all-wood vessel currently being built inside Rutherford's Boat Shop in Richmond with help from KHS summer interns.



Vice Mayor Cesar Zepeda toured the boat project with shop owner Jeffrey Rutherford and Alan Cameron, cofounder of Bay Ship and owner of Bente Boat LLC. After gaining foundational skills through the MC3 (Multi-Craft Core Curriculum) course, a certified pre-apprenticeship and the capstone for KHS's Construction and Trades CTE pathway, the students brought their learning to life through hands-on craftsmanship and mentorship from Alan and his team.

Response to Summer School Questions - Leslie Reckler

- **How many summer programs were run during 2025 - both Summer School Wrap-up**
 - **How many summer programs were run during 2025 - both run by WCCUSD and by other operators.**
 - There were 30 programs running this summer if you count each program and school separately. Meaning if you count Edgenuity as 3 programs because it is running at 3 sites. Please [reference the chart below](#) that shows every program, provides a short description, location of programs, and Enrollment. This does not include special education programs which are planned through that department.
 - **What was the annual attendance target and did you hit it? If not, how far off were you? What was the attendance rate for individual programs/summer school as a whole.**
 - While we did not have an attendance rate target for our summer program we do highlight the importance and anyone with 3 absences or more is dropped. The attrition rate is typically about 30%. We would need additional time to gather data about attendance rate for our district run programs.
 - We use the prioritization lists to meet the district's needs. [This internal document tells the story best.](#) We changed our invitation to 8 points from 9 points this year due to fewer students in intensive need of summer school. Every student with 8 points or higher equaled 1211 (1196 9 pts in 2024, 1,520 9 pts in 2023 & 1,407 9 pts in 2022).
 - We aimed for roughly 1,500 students attending between in person and Edgenuity. We have run in person as high as 500 and our initial planning is around there, but our current number of 300 is about what it has been the last few years for in person. There were about 976 students working on Edgenuity between the 3 schools
 - The Expanded Learning Office requires programs to capture attendance on the Cityspan platform (programs must provide physical sign in sheets as back-up for inputted attendance). Programs must submit attendance weekly. Average daily attendance is available for programs through 7/3/25 and will be updated at the end of summer.
 - Expanded Learning-funded summer programs received Cabinet approval on April 22, 2025. Outreach to families was delayed by an additional week to avoid confusion due to the later release of elementary summer school applications. Despite the shortened program schedule and delayed communication, family interest in summer programming exceeded expectations. As a result, a number of contracts were pulled from the Board agenda to allow for adjustments based on higher-than-anticipated enrollment.
 - **How many children were served per program? Did you hit your enrollment projection? Was it more than last year, less than last year? Why?**
 - The process for district summer school was very similar to last year and was a bit under our projected numbers. The positive is that there are fewer students in need of intensive summer credit recovery. We believe this is due to our credit recovery work during the year. For

elementary we use data from iReady to send out invitations to students and this is vetted by site leaders and teachers who can also add students who would benefit from the program. Numbers for our summer programs at all levels have been steadily declining as we create more opportunities for enrichment.

- For Expanded Learning Program enrollment numbers exceeded expectations, particularly given the reduction of program days and the later than usual outreach to families.
- **Cost of programming. Were you over/under budget? What happens to unused funds if there are any? How do you allocate summer school dollars vs. after school dollars? It is my understanding that the \$\$ can be used for both.**
 - Our district summer programs are funded from LCAP and Title I. We came in a little over budget, because we needed some extra hours for counselors to input course requests and more support for graduation planning. Extra money remains in those accounts for the remainder of the year. It is not lost, but used for other purposes. We are typically right on with our budgeting, but had to flex cost due to errors that came up. For example, typos in the summer graduation program led to us needing to reprint programs for accuracy.
 - The expanded learning programs were within budget. Funds used for summer programming are restricted and can only be used for after school and non school day programming. Last year, the number of programs ultimately implemented was lower than originally planned, resulting in the return of \$1.1 million to CDE.
- **What did you learn this summer? What do you plan to improve upon next year?**
 - For our district programs, credit recovery with both in person and Edgenuity has run in similar fashion for the last 2 years. We are likely to keep the same structure and numbers for future years. One aspect that did not run as well this year as in years past, is that sites did not input as many class needs on our scheduling sheet which led to a lot more work centrally. In addition, we want the counselor of record to be the one who chooses the summer classes. For next year, we will have more in person engagement at the counselor meetings and also ask that an AP at each site is responsible for summer programming. We believe that this will mitigate this particular issue. In elementary schools we are wondering how we can
 - The new requirements around [Attendance Recovery and ELO-P](#) would suggest that expanded learning funded summer camp programs should be located on sites hosting elementary summer school to allow the District to recoup ADA for participating students. To maximize ADA, it would also be advisable for expanded learning funded summer camps to operate for at least the same number of days as elementary summer school programs.
 - Looking ahead to next year, the main area for improvement is securing greater clarity on the approval process and establishing a clear timeline for summer 2026. Program implementation itself went smoothly, but the uncertainty around approval created significant challenges.
- **One of the outcomes of summer programming is to avoid learning loss and academic regression. How is that evaluated and measured? Is there a connection between the school year and the summer year?**
 - In our district programs in elementary we utilize Springboard assessment that does a pre and post test. The assessment platform is DIBBLES (So our teachers got some training this Summer) and we are getting the end of year report and will share as soon as it is available. In secondary, it is much more individualized based on credits that are able to be recovered and giving students the opportunity a second chance to graduate.
 - In evaluating our expanded learning programs, we focus on attendance data as well as youth and family survey results. This approach reflects research showing that five to six weeks of

high-quality summer programming is the ideal duration for preventing summer learning loss and supporting academic growth. According to the RAND Corporation's *Making Summer Count* report, full-day programs that span five to six weeks and include strong attendance, individualized instruction, and small class sizes are especially effective for students from low-income communities (McCombs et al., 2011). A multi-year study by RAND and the Wallace Foundation further found that students who attended at least 20 days of such a program achieved gains equivalent to 20–25% of a school year in both math and reading by the end of their second summer (Augustine et al., 2016). These findings highlight the importance of designing summer programs that last at least five to six weeks, prioritize consistent student attendance, and ensure young people have access to safe, supportive spaces with caring adult mentors.

- **Credit Recovery - how many students, which subjects? How many this year vs. last year, how many graduated this year vs. last year?**
 - Answered above. Subjects are based on student need. There have been years where as many as 70 students have graduated during the summer. With our increased focus on credit recovery, fewer students are not graduating during the regular year. We had about 35 students graduate and this number will likely increase by a few. The last few years have had between 20-35 graduates.
- **Trustee GH would like Jesus Galindo to speak about AIM High. Would anyone else like to speak about their program....Shakira Reynolds, Freedom School? I think it would be best if there were a variety of speakers who shared best practices or takeaways.**
 - We have typically provided an update to the board for Summer programs and they could be included as part of the presentation. Here are a few others:
 - Headwaters Science Institute, Megan Seifert, PhD
 - Bay Area Community Resources, Mariana Lopez Quintanilla
 - Growing Together, Grey Kolvezon
- **How was summer school promoted? What improvements would you make to recruitment, if any?**
 - For district summer school the program was invitation only and was through staff at the site. Elementary through teachers and in secondary through APs and counselors mentioned above. The original offers go out through Parentsquare to family and student emails. Then there are a series of counselor and admin communications to support recruitment and inputting of needed courses. These communications are what needs a review before next year.
 - We provided extensive outreach at our Saturday Camps along with targeted outreach to UPP families at the schools where we offer school year programming. Families need timely advance notice of available summer options to make informed decisions that best support their students and family needs.

Teaching & Learning Planned and Led Summer Programming			
Program	Sites	Educators	Description

Edgenuity Credit Recovery	Soskin Dejean Helms	8 teachers 2 counselors 2 Office Manager 4 Security	Online credit recovery-students are in person 2 days/week and online at home in order to complete the work. Students take unit tests in person to demonstrate proficiency and receive credit. Most students receive 10 credits, some may be able to receive 15.
In Person Credit Recovery	Helms	9 teachers 1 counselor 1 Office Manager 1 attendance clerk 3 security	In person offering for students who prefer to be on site 4 days/week for two classes daily. Students may receive a maximum of 10 credits.
General & Special Education Elementary	Coronado Montalvin Riverside	45 teachers 3 Secretaries 3 attendance clerks	Elementary classes receiving core instruction 4 days/week. Each of these sites has some self contained Special Education classes as needed.
OAASA	Soskin	3 teachers 1 administrator	Summer Enrichment program for rising 6th, 7th and 8th grade African American students. Students receive coursework in Black History, Pre-calculus and Financial literacy.

Program	Sites	Enrollment	Description
Edgenuity Credit Recovery	Soskin Dejean Helms	976	Online credit recovery-students are in person 2 days/week and online at home in order to complete the work. Students take unit tests in person to demonstrate proficiency and receive credit. Most students receive 10 credits, some may be able to receive 15.

In Person Credit Recovery	Helms	200	In person offering for students who prefer to be on site 4 days/week for two classes daily. Students may receive a maximum of 10 credits.
General & Special Education Elementary	Coronado Montalvin Riverside		Elementary classes receiving core instruction 4 days/week. Each of these sites has some self contained Special Education classes as needed.
OAASA	Soskin	75	Summer Enrichment program for rising 6th, 7th and 8th grade African American students. Students receive coursework in Black History, Pre-calculus and Financial literacy.

The Expanded Learning Office is funding 14 programs this summer, spanning several models: afternoon enrichment for students enrolled in elementary summer school; full-day elementary summer camps; secondary academic enrichment; and high school academic intervention, enrichment and high school work-based learning.

Elementary Summer School: Afternoon Enrichment (20 days of programming)			
Site	Partner	Enrollment	Program Description
Coronado	YMCA of the East Bay	113	All programs are offering a mix of structured physical activity, STEM, social and emotional learning activities, arts & crafts, and gardening
Montalvin	BACR	88	
Riverside	BACR	138	

Elementary Full Day Summer Camps (16 days of programming)			
Site	Partner	Enrollment	Program Description

Chavez	BACR	150	Enrichment based camp with students rotating through arts & crafts, structured physical activity, gardening, soccer, and STEM.
Nystrom	Freedom Schools*	90	Freedom School is a literacy forward program that engages students through five essential components: High-quality academic enrichment, Parent and family development, Civic engagement and social action, Intergenerational servant leadership development and Nutrition, health, and mental health.
Sheldon	YMCA of the East Bay	176	Traditional YMCA Summer Day camp model with structured physical activities, arts & crafts, STEM, community building, themed activities, and character development.
Riverside	Headwaters Science Institute	175	This program aims to foster curiosity, critical thinking, and a deep appreciation for the natural world by combining outdoor exploration, scientific methods, and direct interaction with local scientists.
WCM	Love.Learn.Success	90	Mandarin language development, art, structured physical activities, social and emotional learning/community building activities.

*The Freedom School core model is a 30 day program.

Secondary Programs (varying number of days of programming)			
Site	Partner	Enrollment	Program Description
KHS @ DeJean	CTWI	24	Work based learning program designed to introduce students to careers in the Trades.

DeJean	AIM High**	64	Academic enrichment program for rising 6th-9th graders that includes STEM, humanities, social and emotional development, and enrichment.
Helms	AIM High	158	
Greenwood Academy	District Academic Intervention and Enrichment	90	Program is hosting three cohorts of students: cohort One: Juniors with a focus on College and Career; cohort Two: Juniors with a focus on Credit Recovery and Edgenuity; cohort Three: Seniors focused on Graduation Progress.
KHS @ DeJean	District Academic Intervention	68	Traditional academic intervention with classroom teachers.
RHS @ Helms	Summer Bridge, Geometry Camp, Newcomer Enrichment	75	A variety of academic enrichment offerings targeted to different student populations.

**New program for students feeding into DeJean MS.